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# The Yale Political Monthly

*An Undergraduate Publication*

## Against Common Studies

*A Reaction to Dean Kagan's Freshman Address*

## *E Pluribus Unum*

*Dean Kagan's Address to the Class of 1994*

## Missing the Point

*The correct focus of the abortion debate*

## The Fifty-first State?

*Will Puerto Rico join the union?*

## News from around the World

*Foreign perspectives on the crisis in Iraq*



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# The Yale Political Monthly

## An Undergraduate Publication

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OCTOBER, 1990

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## Against Common Studies

William Rhee

No domestic political issue is as heatedly debated and as important to the future of this country as education. In his address to the Yale College Class of 1994, President Benno Schmidt, Jr. stressed the importance of an individual educational philosophy, saying:

*The faculty [of Yale College]...cannot supply you with a philosophy of education any more than we can supply you with a philosophy of life. This must come from your own active learning, sparked by your own imagination, and invested with your singular spirit.*

In his own address, Yale College Dean Donald Kagan offered a contrasting view of educational philosophy, advocating one stressing Western Civilization:

*It is both right and necessary to place Western Civilization and the culture to which it has given rise at the center of our studies and we fail to do so at the peril of our students, our country, and of the hopes for a democratic, liberal society emerging throughout the world today...There is, in fact, great need to make the Western heritage the central and common study in American schools, colleges and universities today.*

*The Western canon has been and continues to be central in education and it is this centrality that exacerbates cultural division.*

Dean Kagan appeared to argue that if all "ethnic and racial" groups were to embrace the liberalism and achievement of traditional Western thought then unity would result. While the Western canon is undeniably the basis of American culture and the source of many important achievements, it cannot serve as a unifying element. The Western canon has been and continues to be central in education and it is this centrality that exacerbates cultural division.

Although not explicitly stated and—in

*William Rhee is a Freshman in Trumbull.*

fact—carefully avoided, the superiority of Western Civilization was implied in Dean Kagan's address. He asserted that "Americans...share...a system of laws and beliefs...developed within the context of Western Civilization," implying that the contribution from other cultures is relatively negligible. Since he argued that there is a need to make it the primary educational focus, it is obviously considered to be the most important. Of all cultures, that of the West is allegedly the most worthy of emulation: "People everywhere envy not only its science and technology but also its freedom and popular government and the institutions that make them possible,...[institutions with] roots uniquely in the experience and ideas of the West." Although President Schmidt cautioned against "utilitarianism," the study of Western Civilization is somewhat utilitarian to Dean Kagan since he stated "our students will be handicapped in their lives after college if they do not have a broad and deep knowledge of [Western] culture." Finally, there is the argument that only a universal acceptance of Western thought will save the world from itself.

Although Western Civilization has made many essential contributions, it is not necessarily superior to others. Admittedly, "most of the sins and errors of Western Civilization are those of the human race," but it still was the Western Civilization, above all others, that committed such excesses on the rest of the world. This hackneyed argument has been dealt with in great detail by previous authors; I shall only mention it briefly. Historically, Western Civilization was able to unify and therefore subjugate vast parts of the world. Most of these subjugated cultures were forced, if not by



outright coercion, then by necessity, to renounce their native culture and adopt a Western one. The discourse and methodology of the West became the only real international medium for the dissemination of ideas and subsequent innovation. Most of the greatest accomplishments of humanity are expansions on Western ideas not necessarily because Western ideas are superior but primarily because Western ideas and methodologies were the only ones in use. Were other cultures allowed to maintain their own respective integrities, inheriting ideas from the West just as the West annexed new ideas and concepts when it was expedient, then perhaps these cultures might have investigated new avenues that would have resulted in new discoveries and inventions that would have rivaled if not surpassed Western ones. Initially, the only true superiority of Western Civilization was its ability to cooperate in exercising military control over other cultures.

When taken in the context of rising nationalism and ethnicity, racial parochialism is indeed dangerous. It is, however, at least partially caused by the existing centrality of Western Civilization. In non-Western ethnic groups, cultural crises resulted from the clash of the traditional native culture with the intrusive Western one. In many instances, the traditional culture was replaced by force with Western culture. A sense of cultural inferiority resulted from this cultural confusion. Although Western ideas were considered supreme, they were received secondhand. Individuals of different ethnic groups originally could never expect to be on the same level as Westerners. Either overtly or incidentally, the search for cultural identity by non-Westerners was oppressed.

Considering the current centrality of Western Civilization, Western thought has obviously been available to all racial and ethnic groups. That certain racial or ethnic groups choose to ignore Western thought is their own choice. Unlike previous periods in history, they cannot now be coerced into pursuing the Western canon. If these errant factions properly pursued Western ideas as Dean Kagan advocated, then indeed the common unifying belief in egalitarianism would limit their danger. The likelihood that these groups will suddenly convert and exhibit interest in a school of thought previously considered hostile, however, is small. Even at Yale, a student may go through his four years totally ignorant of any non-Western culture. (Proficiency in a foreign

language does not guarantee understanding of the culture of that language).

While clearly part of Western Civilization, Western egalitarianism is not universal and can be viewed as somewhat hypocritical. With respect to foreign affairs, America has repeatedly exhibited a pragmatic propensity to violate its own revered democratic principles.

A total equality of ideas is not being advocated. Each individual culture should be first and foremost intimately familiar with the fundamental ideas of its own culture. Despite increased egalitarianism, prejudice still abounds and members of minority groups are still undeniably distinguished from others. The affirmed superiority of Caucasian Western civilization must at least indirectly proliferate prejudice even though such prejudice is currently antithetical to its tenets. Each individual needs to learn about his or her own culture to avoid the aforementioned identity crisis.

Although perhaps less pragmatic in a world dominated by Western culture, Westerners need to eliminate their notorious ignorance of cultures other than their own. Ideas should be judged independently, not categorized in broad cultural blocks. A universal acceptance of independent ideas would undeniably increase cultural egalitarianism and thereby limit the attraction of cultural parochialism. Certain ideas of Western Civilization, such as its liberalism, should be and have been accepted by most of the civilized world. Other insubstantial Western conventions, such as fashion, have also been accepted with these substantive ideas. As President Schmidt astutely noted, it is the extreme greatness of Western civilization that should motivate students to pursue other cultures:

*The greater the teacher, the greater is the need for critical independence in the student. The greater the riches of the curriculum, the greater the need for autonomy with respect to the aims of education.*

Defining a high goal for education, as Dean Kagan has done, infringes upon this essential autonomy. Although his suggested action may have the opposite effect, Dean Kagan apparently concurs:

*A liberal education needs to bring about a challenge to the ideas, habits and attitudes that students bring with them, so that their vision may be broadened, their knowledge expanded, their understanding deepened. That challenge must come from studies that are unfamiliar, sometimes uncomfortably so, and from a wide variety of fellow-students from*

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*Everyone should be first and foremost intimately familiar with the fundamental ideas of his or her own culture*



many different backgrounds, holding different opinions, expressing them freely to one another, and exploring them together.

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Only an understanding of all cultures, not the excessive study of one, will promote unity

Dean Kagan originally implied that ethnic and cultural parochialism should give way to the increased study of unfamiliar Western thought, though here he advocates the opposite, that Western parochialism should give way to an international and cross-cultural awareness. Not only would this enhance international and cross-cultural amity, but also avoid a widespread stagnation of Western thought (currently, only a small minority of people is familiar with the ideas of all other major cultures).

Instead of acting as a unifying element, further emphasis on the Western canon may actually hamper unity. Western culture is obviously and undeniably already central in Western education and, to a lesser extent, non-Western education as well. Both widespread ignorance of other cultures and prejudice, albeit less prevalent, still exists in Western civilization. Western egalitarianism and democracy are indeed the greatest unifying hope, but they are only a small and very recent part of the totality of Western thought. Many other cultures have already embraced and integrated liberalism into their distinct identities.

Only an understanding of all cultures, not the excessive study of one, will promote unity. Differences between cultures are good and necessary. The maintenance of cultural differences in a context of universal tolerance will not only unify humanity but allow the greatest dissemination of ideas. Any further fa-

voring of Western culture will encourage the continued transformation of other cultures to that of the West with the result of the irrecoverable loss of unique cultures. For its accomplishments and utility, the Western canon will be, at least in part, learned by all. Instead of continuing to ask other cultures to conform to the standards of the West, the West should accommodate other cultures and learn more about them.

If any requirement should be advocated, it is the further study of other cultures. As President Schmidt suggested, Yale and the nation need to "take seriously the responsibilities of liberal education, of freedom in the pursuit of truth,...for the strength of institutions of liberal education lies in a fundamental principle of restraint: Yale College respects, indeed insists upon, the autonomy of every individual." Were students or people compelled, through requirements or otherwise, either to learn more of Western Civilization or of other cultures, such learning would be "rote...inert knowledge" that would not bestow the depth of understanding necessary for the desired harmony. Such understanding can only be attained by the sincere and willing efforts of the individual.

Although both the detailed study of the Western canon and cross-cultural unity are worthy pursuits, the first will undoubtedly fail to achieve the second. Yale and the nation need to continue to support the "autonomous" educational philosophy of President Benno Schmidt, Jr., as opposed to that of Dean Kagan, to foster truly "liberal" education and the greatest hope for unity.



## E Pluribus Unum Dean Kagan's Address to the Class of 1994 7

Ladies and gentlemen of the Class of 1994, parents, and friends, greetings and welcome to Yale. To a greater degree than ever before this class is made up of a sampling, not of Connecticut, not of New England, not even of North America, but of all the continents of the world.

As I stood a year ago greeting the Class of 1993 I was thrilled by how much Yale and America have been enriched in the three centuries since its foundation by the presence and the contribution of the many racial and ethnic groups rarely if ever represented in Yale's early years. The greater diversity among our faculty and student body, as in the American people at large, is a source of strength and it should be a source of pride as well.

But ethnic and racial diversity is not without its problems. Few governments and societies have been able to combine diversity with internal peace, harmony, freedom, and the unity required to achieve these goals.

Perhaps the greatest success in ancient times was achieved by the Roman Empire, which absorbed a wide variety of peoples under a single government, generally tolerated cultural diversity, and gradually granted to all Roman citizenship, the rule of law, and equality before the law.

But the Romans had imposed their rule over independent nations by force and maintained peace and order by its threat. From the nations whose cultures they tolerated they did not create a single people; they did not rely on voluntary and enthusiastic participation in government and society of a unified population, as a modern democratic republic must.

From the Middle Ages until its collapse in 1918 the Hapsburg Empire did a remarkable job of bringing a great variety of ethnic groups into the main stream of government and society, but it never succeeded in dissolving the distinct identities of the different groups, living together in separate communities, speaking their native languages, competing and quarreling with one another, and finally hostile to the dominant ethnic groups.

The destruction of the Hapsburg Empire and its dissolution into smaller units did not end ethnic dissention, which threatens the survival of such successor states as Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

In our time nationalism and ethnicity have emerged as immensely powerful forces, for good, but also for evil. Optimistic hopes for a diminution of differences among peoples and for a movement towards the unity of all mankind have been dashed as national and ethnic hostilities have played a major part in bringing on two terrible world wars. Even today they endanger the integrity of the Soviet Union and threaten peace both in Europe and in Africa. They have brought inter-ethnic slaughter in Nigeria and all but destroyed the beautiful land of Lebanon.

From its origins the United States of America has faced a new challenge and opportunity. Its early settlers from the old world were somewhat diverse but had much in common. Most were British, spoke English, and practiced some form of Protestant Christianity.

Before long, however, people of many different ethnic, religious, and national origins arrived with different cultural traditions, speaking various languages. Except for the slaves brought from Africa, most came voluntarily, as families and individuals, usually eager to

*Few governments and societies have been able to combine diversity with freedom*



satisfy desires that could not be met in their former homelands. They swiftly became citizens and, within a generation or so, Americans.

In our own time finally, after too long a delay, African-Americans also have achieved freedom, equality before the law, and full citizenship. People of different origins live side by side, often in ethnic communities, but never in enclaves of the country separated from other such enclaves.

Although some inherit greater advantages than others, all are equal before the law, which does not recognize ethnic or other groups, but only individuals. Each person is free to maintain old cultural practices, abandon them for ones found outside his ethnic group, or to create some mixture or combination.

Our country is not a nation like most others. "Nation" comes from the Latin word for birth: a nation is a group of people of common ancestry, a breed. Chinese, Frenchmen, and Swedes feel a bond that ties them to their compatriots as to a greatly extended family and provides the unity and commitment they need.

But Americans do not share a common ancestry and a common blood. They and their forebears come from every corner of the earth. What they have in common and what brings them together is a system of laws and beliefs that shaped the establishment of the country, a system developed within the context of Western Civilization. It should be obvious, then, that all Americans need to learn about that civilization if we are to understand our country's origins, and share in its heritage, purposes, and character.

At present, however, the study of Western civilization in our schools and colleges is under heavy attack. We are told that we should not give a privileged place in the curriculum to the great works of its history and literature.

At the extremes of this onslaught the civilization itself, and therefore its study, is attacked because of its history of slavery, imperialism, racial prejudice, addiction to war, its exclusion of women and people not of the white race from its rights and privileges. Some criticize its study as narrow, limiting, arrogant, and discriminatory, asserting that it has little or no value for those of different cultural origins. Others concede the value of the Western heritage but regard it as only one among many, all of which have equal claim to our attention.



ruled most of the human race throughout history and rule most of the world today.

It has produced the theory and practice of the separation of church from state, thereby protecting each from the other and creating a free and safe place for the individual conscience. At its core is a tolerance and respect for diversity unknown in most cultures. One of its most telling characteristics is its encouragement of criticism of itself and its ways. Only in the West can one imagine a movement to neglect the culture's own heritage in favor of some other. The university itself, a specially sheltered place for such self-examination, is a Western phenomenon only partially assimilated in other cultures.

My claim is that most of the sins and errors of Western civilization are those of the human race. Its special achievements and values, however, are gifts to all humanity and are widely seen as such around the world today, although its authorship is rarely acknowledged. People everywhere envy not only its science and technology but also its freedom and popular government and the institutions that make them possible. Their roots are to be found uniquely in the experience and ideas of the West.

Western culture and institutions are the most powerful paradigm in the world today. As they increasingly become the objects of emulation by peoples everywhere, their study becomes essential for those of all nations who wish to understand their nature and origins. How odd that Americans should choose this moment to declare it irrelevant, unnecessary, and even vicious.

There is, in fact, great need to make the Western heritage the central and common study in American schools, colleges, and universities today. Happily, student bodies have grown vastly more diverse. Less happily, students are seeing themselves increasingly as parts of groups distinct from other groups. They often feel pressure to communicate mainly with others like themselves within a group and to pursue intellectual interests that are of particular importance to it.

The result that threatens is a series of discrete experiences in college, isolated from one another, segregated, and partial. But a liberal education needs to bring about a challenge to the ideas, habits, and attitudes that students bring with them, so that their vision may be broadened, their knowledge expanded,

their understanding deepened. That challenge must come from studies that are unfamiliar, sometimes uncomfortably so, and from a wide variety of fellow-students from many different backgrounds, holding different opinions, expressing them freely to one another, and exploring them together.

If the students are to educate each other in this way some part of their studies must be in common, and their natural subject is the experience of which our country is the heir and of which it remains an important part. There is, after all, a common culture in our society, itself various, changing, rich with the contributions of Americans who come or whose ancestors came from every continent in the world, yet recognizably and unmistakably American.

At this moment in history an objective observer would have to say that it derives chiefly from the experience of Western Civilization, and especially from England, whose language and institutions are the most copious springs from which American culture draws its life. I say that without embarrassment, as an immigrant from a tiny country on the fringe of the West, without any connection with the Anglo-Saxon founders of the United States. Our students will be handicapped in their lives after college if they do not have a broad and deep knowledge of the culture in which they live and the roots from which it comes.

There are implications, too, for our public life. Constitutional government and democracy are not natural blessings; they are far from common in the world today, and they have been terribly rare in the history of the human race. They are the product of some peculiar developments in the history of Western civilization, and they, too, need to be thoroughly understood by all of our citizens if our way of governing ourselves is to continue and flourish. We must all understand how it works, how it came to be, and how hard it is to sustain.

Our country was invented and has grown strong by achieving unity out of diversity while respecting the importance and integrity of the many elements that make it up. The founders chose as a slogan *e pluribus unum*, which kept a continuing and respected place for the plurality of the various groups that made up the country, but they emphasized the unity which was essential for its well-being.

During the revolution that brought us independence Benjamin Franklin addressed his colleagues, different from one another in so



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many ways, yet dependent on one another for survival and success, using a serious pun to make his point. He told them that they must all hang together or assuredly they would all hang separately.

That warning still has meaning for Americans today. As our land becomes ever more diverse the danger of separation, segregation by ethnic group, mutual suspicion and hostility increases and with it the danger to the national unity which, ironically, is essential to the qualities that attracted its many people to this country. Our colleges and universities have a great responsibility to communicate and affirm the value of our common heritage, even as they question it and continue to broaden it with rich new elements.

Ladies and gentlemen of the Class of 1994, you, too have important responsibilities. Take pride in your family and in the culture they and your forebears have brought to our shores. Learn as much as you can about that culture and share it with all of us. Learn as much as you can of what the particular cultures of others have to offer.

But most important, do not fail to learn the great traditions that are the special gifts of Western civilization which is the main foundation of our university and our country. Do not let our separate heritages draw us apart and build walls between us, but use them to enrich the whole. In that way they may join with our common heritage to teach us, to bring us together as friends, to unite us into a single people seeking common goals, to make a reality of the ideal inherent in the motto *e pluribus unum*.

My claim is that most of the time and energy and the most of the world today has produced the theory and practice of the separation of church from state, thereby separating each from the other and creating a void and a place for the individual conscience. Its core is a tolerant and respect for diversity unknown in most cultures. One of its most telling characteristics is its encouragement of individualism and its ways. Only in the West can one imagine a movement to neglect the culture's own heritage in favor of some other. The university itself, a specially sheltered institution for such self-examination, is a Western phenomenon only partially established in other cultures.

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There is, in fact, great need to make the Western heritage the central and common study in American schools, colleges, and universities today. Happily, modern bodies have grown vastly more diverse. I am happily confident we are seeing the masses increasingly as parts of groups distinct from other groups. They often feel pressure to communicate actively with others like themselves within a group and to pursue intellectual interests that are of particular importance to it.

The result that there is a series of distinct experiments in college culture. I have one student segregated and put in a special class and one to bring about a change in the class habits and attitudes that students bring with them so that their vision may be broadened, their knowledge expanded.



## Missing the Point

Andrew Sullivan II

On 22 January 1973, the Supreme Court made public its decision in *Roe v. Wade*. It ruled that a woman could not be prevented from having an abortion during the first three months of pregnancy. From that time until the mid-1980s, because any action to limit abortion beyond what the Court allowed invariably would be ruled unconstitutional, state legislatures have either limited the issue of abortion to questions of Medicaid funding or ignored it altogether.

In the late eighties, however, state legislatures began to pass laws which limited abortion directly and ceased restricting themselves to questions of funding. Ronald Reagan's appointees to the Supreme Court made it substantially more conservative than it had been in the seventies; after Justice Anthony Kennedy joined the Court in 1987, it became apparent that a new majority might be more open to limiting or reversing *Roe*. The first test of this ruling turned out to be a Missouri law which requires extensive tests for viability after the twentieth week of pregnancy and affirms that life begins at conception. The Supreme Court ruled in *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services*, issued 3 July of last year, that this law was indeed constitutional. This year, the Supreme Court upheld a Minnesota law requiring women under eighteen to get permission from both parents for an abortion; it was constitutional, the Court ruled, because of a provision that permits young women who feel that informing their parents will put them in danger to get permission from a judge instead.

Since *Webster*, several state legislatures have adopted laws to restrict abortion further,

mostly laws requiring parental consent. Pennsylvania recently passed a law requiring not only that minors seek parental consent but also that married women inform their husbands. This law also bans abortion for sex selection, although it is unclear how that provision might be enforced. This year, the Governors of Idaho and Louisiana both vetoed bills to ban abortion entirely except in cases of rape, incest, or danger to the mother's life. Previously, in Louisiana, Governor Buddy Roemer vetoed a bill which made no exception at all for rape or incest. The legislature of Guam, an American territory in the Marianas Islands, passed a similar bill this spring.

Shortly after the Pennsylvania and Guam bills were passed, Federal judges cited *Roe* to rule them unconstitutional and issued injunctions preventing them from going into effect. Both Attorneys General, however, have appealed the rulings to the Supreme Court, and the Court is scheduled to issue its rulings this fall. Because these laws are both direct challenges to *Roe v. Wade*, and given that several Justices (in particular, Antonin Scalia and William Rehnquist) are publicly opposed to that decision, the Court is likely to reconsider *Roe* when deciding these cases. It is quite possible that the current Court will vote to overturn that precedent or limit it further by upholding the Pennsylvania law.

The space on the Court formerly filled by Justice William Brennan, furthermore, is likely to be taken by Judge David Souter. There has been no widespread opposition to his nomination, as was the case with Robert Bork, despite the fact that he is likely to vote to overturn *Roe* if he is confirmed. If the current Court deadlocks on the current cases, leaving

Since *Webster*, several states have adopted laws to restrict abortion, mostly laws requiring parental consent

Andrew Sullivan is a Sophomore in Berkeley.



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*Neither side acknowledges the validity of the opposing point of view or even respects the right of the other side to hold that view*

the status quo in place, some state or territorial legislature is bound to pass a law to challenge *Roe* after Souter joins the Court. Whether in 1990 or a year or so later, there is a good chance that *Roe* will be significantly narrowed in scope or overturned altogether. If this happens, the state legislatures will be established as the primary forum for the abortion debate.

These assemblies will face the unenviable position of having to listen to not one but two extremely vocal pressure groups. "Pro-life" organizations, led by the National Right to Life Committee, want nothing less than a complete ban on abortions. Claiming that human life begins at conception, pro-lifers argue that there is rarely if ever any justification for killing a human fetus. Some cite Scripture or church doctrine, while others refer to the film *The Silent Scream* as proof that the fetus is indeed alive. When asked about what should happen *after* the child is born, pro-lifers have more trouble. They generally say that the child should be put up for adoption or argue that if the mother had been responsible then she would not have this problem.

In recent years, pro-life organizations frustrated by *Roe* have begun efforts to reduce abortions more directly. These organizations use two basic tactics to make their point. "Sidewalk counselling," most recently conducted by Operation Rescue, involves pro-lifers protesting outside abortion clinics and talking directly to women entering the clinics, trying to convince them not to abort. This can be peaceful, with demonstrators rationally explaining the alternatives to abortion, but it is more often a noisy confrontation in which protestors shout "baby-killers" at everyone entering the clinic or even blockade the clinic entirely. Many pro-life organizations also operate "crisis pregnancy centers" whose stated purpose is to educate women about the alternatives to abortion. Again, however, extremism is common; many such centers place misleading advertisements implying that they do in fact perform abortions. When women arrive expecting rationally delivered information, they are plunked down instead in a dark room in front of a VCR which shows them pictures of dismembered fetuses and limits its lecture to the evils of abortion, often without making a decent argument for the alternatives.

On the other side, "pro-choice" organizations consider abortion-on-demand a right that every woman should have. Led by

the National Abortion Rights Action League, pro-choicers favor at the very least the maintenance of the status quo. Most support public funding for abortion, reasoning that if rich women have this right, so do poor women. To these people, any restriction of abortion is an encroachment upon a woman's right to control her own body and is another example of rich white men telling women how to live their lives. Pro-choicers argue in addition that abortion is often necessary because a poor teenage mother, often abandoned by the father of her child, would have her life destroyed if she had to raise the baby. Many children would suffer as well, they claim, condemned to grow up in terrible poverty. Or the mother would have to risk injury in an illegal "back-alley" abortion. But like the pro-lifers, they handle the opposing arguments poorly; faced with *The Silent Scream*, they argue that the Constitution recognizes life as beginning at birth or ignore the issue entirely.

Until the mid-eighties, the pro-choice movement limited its activism to an annual march in Washington as a sort of counter-protest to the annual March for Life. *Roe* was apparently safe, so serious organizing had no real purpose. As it became more evident that a conservative Reagan Court would vote to overturn this "landmark" decision, however, NARAL was formed and grassroots organization began again in earnest. Most pro-choice demonstrations go beyond frequent political rallies; they are counter-protests at abortion clinics where pro-lifers have appeared. Volunteers often accompany women past the demonstrators. Pro-choicers also occasionally boycott businesses which oppose them; the best-known such boycott is of Domino's Pizza, whose owner, Tom Monaghan, has given money to Michigan Right to Life. The success of this boycott is questionable at best, but the argument has some force; a thinly-veiled threat of a boycott of Idaho potatoes is partially credited for convincing that state's Governor to veto an abortion ban.

Both of these sides present compelling arguments. Unfortunately, because each side claims the moral high ground, neither side will compromise. Neither side acknowledges the validity of the opposing point of view or even respects the right of the other side to hold that view. The tactics of both sides clearly show this: the pro-lifers attempt to mislead and shock women into snap decisions not to abort, while

*Pro-lifers want nothing less than a complete ban on abortions, while pro-choicers regard abortion-on-demand as an inalienable right*



the pro-choicers refuse to let the protestors speak and organize boycotts of people clearly following their consciences. Debate decays into an emotional shouting match which leaves everyone angry and resolves nothing. No pragmatic policy can ever stem from this. If this is all legislatures have, they will be forced to support one side over the other. Neither choice is satisfactory. Unwanted children will either be killed before they are born or have no opportunity for decent lives afterwards.

They will suffer because the legislatures missed the point in their debates. Instead of looking for the best ways to cut down on unwanted children, they probably will look only at whether one such method, abortion, should be legal. Both pro- and anti-abortion forces are responsible for this, since neither addresses this central issue. The pro-lifers ignore it, choosing to focus on the evils of abortion, and the pro-choicers claim that legal abortion alone solves it. Such oversimplification must not be allowed to become the basis for public policy.

Rather, legislatures must develop ways to stop unwanted pregnancies *before* they occur. Many teen-age pregnancies result from a lack of basic knowledge about human reproduction and birth control or an unwillingness to abstain from sex. Certainly, then, an option which legislatures must consider is better sex education with a distinct focus on how to prevent pregnancy and the consequences of not doing so. Birth control should be made more accessible to those who need it, perhaps through the schools. At the same time, however, this education should make it clear that sex is *not* a prerequisite for adulthood. It should attempt to counteract American society's glorification of sex with the notion that it's OK to wait until later. Legislatures should also look for ways to educate the public at large on the prevention of unwanted pregnancies, since most parents are out of high school. And because some unwanted pregnancies will still occur, the legislatures, perhaps in concert with the Congress, should develop programs to take care of the children. It could pass bills assisting day-care programs so that mothers can continue with school or their careers.

At the same time, the legislatures should develop ways to cut down more directly on abortion in the us. This poses a particular challenge, because legislators *are* predominantly male, and feminist groups will immediately and

reasonably accuse them of furthering male domination. Legislatures, therefore, or Congress in an advisory role, might do well to establish commissions the majority of whose members are women to decide whether abortion should be restricted at all, and if so, to develop criteria to determine when it should be legal. These criteria should be phased in over a number of years, so that programs designed to reduce the number of abortions can take some effect first. The commissions should be ideologically balanced at the start with members supporting all points of view concerning this issue. But it is imperative that the members be willing to compromise and mindful of the ultimate goal, that being to reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies. Otherwise, the commissions will not develop an intelligent, feasible policy.

The FDA can also help this process by approving the "French abortion pill," RU-486. This pill, if administered properly, induces an abortion during the first two weeks of pregnancy. It may seem counter-intuitive to approve an abortifacient to reduce abortions, but as part of a larger policy, it could be beneficial. Given that some abortions will still be performed, it would make sense for the procedure to be as humane as possible for both mother and fetus; RU-486, because it must be administered soon after conception, satisfies that standard. States could adopt rules that with exceptions (e.g. if a woman is raped and does not report it for several weeks) require that all abortions legal under the criteria developed by the commission be performed in this way. Because RU-486 might appear attractive as a convenient morning-after pill were it made available immediately, however, the FDA should wait until states have established extensive programs to reduce unwanted pregnancies before approving it.

It may well be that after such a program is implemented no one will be satisfied. Certainly, pro- and anti-abortion extremists will not. But if society benefits from it, that will be justification enough for its approval. Though it may not be morally pure, a pragmatic approach will save children's lives without destroying the lives of mothers. This is a far better option than those currently available to state legislatures. At present, pro-life and pro-choice activists have subordinated the interests of society to their own moral integrities. It is time to reverse those priorities. It is time to place children and mothers first.

*A pragmatic approach to the abortion issue will save children's lives without destroying the lives of their mothers*

*Unwanted children will suffer because legislatures have missed the point in their debates*



## The Fifty-first State

Carlos Viana

*A scale model of the Statue of Liberty evoked memories of Tiananmen Square. A mock barrier, dubbed the Wall of Colonialism, was battered down as demonstrators cheered. It might have been an anti-Soviet prop at an independence rally in Lithuania. Instead, this was in the city of Ponce in southern Puerto Rico, and the 125,000 yellow-clad marchers were not calling for the island's freedom, but to join the United States as the fifty-first state.<sup>1</sup>*

Puerto Rico, an island with a population of 3,196,520 as of 1980 is currently passing through the most important political moment of its history. It is important to emphasize the fact that Puerto Rico has been a colony since its discovery in 1493 during Christopher Columbus' second voyage. The island, it seems, is approaching the moment when for the first time in 497 years Puerto Ricans will be able to decide their future political status: improved commonwealth, statehood, or full independence.

In order to understand the controversy surrounding the plebiscite, which will be held in 1991, a clear idea of the chronology of Puerto Rico's colonial history is necessary. It was one of the less economically attractive islands in the northeastern part of the Caribbean Sea to European immigrants in the seventeenth century. The port of San Juan, however, was important to the intercolonial traffic of the time because it was one of the closest to Spain. For this reason San Juan became a frequent target for corsairers and pirates in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and this circumstance further elevated Puerto Rico's importance, for the island became a Spanish military outpost. During the nineteenth century there was an

awakening of what is known today as the Puerto Rican identity. Puerto Ricans began to realize that they were different from Spaniards both socially and politically. At the end of 1897, finally, Puerto Rico was granted autonomy by the Spanish government, a move of desperation reflecting the problems Spain was having with Cuban separatists at that time.

For good or for bad, on 21 April 1898 the United States Army invaded and occupied, practically without resistance, the south of Puerto Rico. A military government was imposed on the island by President McKinley. On 12 April 1900 the Foraker Act granted Puerto Ricans a civilian government but not American citizenship. On 2 March 1917 the Jones Act granted citizenship to the islanders, although it was the second-class citizenship they possess to this day.<sup>2</sup>

*Under the existing arrangement, Puerto Ricans are quasi citizens of the United States. Though they cannot vote in national elections and send only a shadow representative to Congress, they are free to migrate to the mainland, can serve in the armed forces, and pay no federal income tax.<sup>3</sup>*

Time went on, however, and new political leaders arrived with new ideas. Luis Munoz Marin, a former independentist leader, conceived the idea of creating a "free associated state", an idea well-received both in the White House and in Puerto Rico because it did nothing but hide the whole colonial system that prohibited Puerto Ricans on the island from attaining full citizenship behind an impotent "state" government. The commonwealth, as it was imperfectly rendered into English, was to consist of a system very similar to that of a state, but Puerto Ricans would not pay federal taxes. Puerto Rico receives approximately three billion

*Puerto Rico is approaching the moment when Puerto Ricans will be able to choose their future political status for the first time in 497 years*

*Carlos Viana is a Freshman in Ezra Stiles and an Assistant Editor of the YPM.*



dollars each year in "free aid", which is to say, funding from the United States government. Puerto Ricans, furthermore, were denied representation in Congress, but they retained a "Resident Commissioner", a Representative without a vote. This has remained the extent of Puerto Rico's participation in federal politics to this day.

On 4 June 1951 Puerto Rican citizens had the opportunity to vote on a referendum calling for the formation of a Constitutional Assembly to create the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The measure was approved with over three-quarters of the votes, though forty-two percent of the electorate abstained.<sup>4</sup> The high rate of abstention clearly indicates how unprepared the people of Puerto Rico were at the time to make a decision on the subject.

It was not until fifteen years later that a "real plebiscite" (which was actually more farcical than the first) took place. The Commonwealth option gained 60% of the votes and statehood 39% while an abstaining but microscopic Independence movement garnered only 0.6%. As a matter of fact 1,067,439 people registered, but only 707,293 of them voted.<sup>5</sup>

Over the years the Puerto Rican case has appeared before many international forums, especially the United Nations Decolonization Committee. There the debate has been repetitive: Cuba and Venezuela usually have lead the discussions and the United States has been permanently absent, asserting that this is a purely internal affair. It is important to note two very curious situations which have occurred during the debate. First of all, Trinidad and Tobago has always abstained. It is a masterpiece of irony that a country which passed through the same stages of decolonization still abstains in UN resolutions on such matters. Second, the Venezuelan President admitted in a public news conference that his country abstained due to external pressures. Obviously the United States government did not want the world to know that it was having internal problems very similar to those involving the Baltic nations. Is independence worth it if Puerto Rico is to remain a pseudo-colony, a satellite, a military base on the tourist route? There is an irony there which many independentists fail to see.

It is true that the Commonwealth was a good deal for Puerto Rico both economically and socially. Between the years of 1950 and 1980 the population of Puerto Rico grew by almost a million persons [a third of the population in 1980].<sup>6</sup> Literacy

is currently at 93%.<sup>7</sup> Both are indications of the progress achieved on the island. For a few years now, however, Puerto Rico's infrastructure has been beginning to crumble. Public services, specifically electricity and water, are of the lowest quality. Economic growth has stopped and dependence on the presence of tax-exempt corporations to bring capital to the island has increased greatly.

This is why the pro-Commonwealth partisans are submitting what they call the "improved Commonwealth". The interesting part about that is that they pretend that under their scheme Puerto Rico will receive the same benefits statehood would bring, without the disadvantage of statehood—federal taxes. In fact, the only real advantages of the Improved Commonwealth are the guarantees of Spanish as the first language and the permanence of a Puerto Rican Olympic team. The other important advantage presented by the *populares* (partisans of the Improved Commonwealth plan) is the possibility of making international treaties with other countries, a dubious measure which could easily strain US-Puerto Rican relations severely.

There is as little to say about the Independence choice as there are few people to support it. Although it would give the island sovereignty, it would suspend all of the federal welfare programs, making it very unpopular. Puerto Ricans, in addition, although they consider themselves Latin Americans for the most part, do not want to fall into the neocolonialism which almost all Latin American countries are now experiencing due to the heavy loans which are breaking the backs of their economies.

The last option, statehood, has the advantage of being both popular and ending once and for all the colonial era in Puerto Rico's history. As opposed to the Improved Commonwealth plan, assimilating Puerto Rico into the union is a form of decolonization accepted by the United Nations. Economically and politically statehood seems extremely attractive, especially when compared with the other alternatives.

*A report by the Congressional Budget Office predicts that statehood probably will carry the closing of tax-exempted factories. On the other hand with statehood the benefits from federal programs will climb up to \$5.1 billion compared to the \$1.2 billion that will be received with the Commonwealth status.<sup>8</sup>*

Socially many people are afraid that statehood will erode Puerto Rican culture

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*Is independence worth it if Puerto Rico is to remain a pseudo-colony, a satellite, a military base on the tourist route?*



because they fear the imposition of English as the national tongue. So far neither of the two proposals for statehood (one in the Senate and one in the House of Representatives) states or implies that English will be imposed on Puerto Rico.

In the 1990s it is ironic that the United States of America should act in the international arena as the greatest defender of the right of self-determination of peoples and decolonization while it still possesses a territory where its residents cannot vote for its President and do not have representation in its Congress.

It is not only in the hands of Puerto Ricans to make a decision this time that will be permanent with economic, social, and political guarantees for themselves and for the rest of the Americans. It is also in the hands of Congress to approve a rapid and effective measure to make the plebiscite a fair one that will finally help to erase the image of the colonial empire of the United States, an image which is incompatible with the most basic foundation of the American system—the right of self-determination. To speak for and defend something, you must practice it yourself. Everyone must be a first class citizen, or no citizen at all.

## Notes:

1. Barret, Laurence I., "Puerto Rico, the 51st Estado: Statehood gains momentum with a boost from Bush," *Time*, volume 135, 26 March 1990, page 19.
2. Quinones Calderon, Antonio, *El Libro de Puerto Rico*, Rio Piedrar, Puerto Rico: Ediciones omieras de Puerto Rico, 1983, pages 140-143.
3. Baker, James M. et al., "Will there be a 51st Star?" *Newsweek*, volume 116, 30 July 1990, page 22.
4. Quinones, op. cit.
5. *ibid.*
6. Moran Arce, Lucas, *Historia de Puerto Rico*, 2nd Edition, San Juan, Libratex Inc., 1987, p.211.
7. *ibid.*, page 212.
8. Barret, op. cit.



## News from around the World *The Crisis in Iraq* 17

*The crisis stirring in the Persian Gulf has widespread and diverse ramifications which reach, one way or another, almost every country in the world. It has, therefore, given rise to an equally widespread and diverse set of reactions in many of these countries—reactions which generally go unreported in the American press. The staff of the YPM has searched through a number of foreign publications and has assembled here a brief, representative cross-section of what people around the world are saying about the crisis. —Eds.*

### Cuba

*Gramma 26 August 1990  
Finances at war, troops on the  
prowl*

Differences of terminology at the UN, threats to and from everywhere, the growing military buildup in the Middle East, protests in affected countries and by population groups characterize and further complicate the conflict in the Arabian-Persian Gulf August 12-19.

While UN diplomats said Resolutions 660, 661, and 662 adopted by the Security Council to condemn Iraq by means of a trade, financial, and military boycott made no mention of the word "blockade" they used the word embargo. US and British measures were closer to a siege given the decision to intercept merchant ships and extend sanctions to food and medicine affecting millions of civilians, among

them thousands of foreigners retained there.

The UN Security Council ruled that Baghdad must allow the departure of all foreigners who so desire and not obstruct diplomatic activity. The Yemeni representative said concern should extend to all "without exception" including the Palestinians. Cuba noted the irony of having the United States demand departure of foreigners while using force to prevent food and medicine from entering Iraq.

Washington has avoided use of the word blockade because it is an act of war alien to the decision of the Security Council, although President Bush said there was no need to worry about semantics, wrote AFP [*Agence France Presse* - Ed.]

Semantics notwithstanding, the current buildup clarifies the intentions of the governments involved. While diplomats seek the right word, sophisticated weapons and thousands of men have moved into the area whose environment is enough to destroy anyone's composure. Keep in mind that on the 13th the Pentagon ordered its ships to fire on any Iraqi vessel that refused to be inspected and it has stopped others of various nationalities.

The repeated demand by Bush for the total, immediate, and unconditional withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait, poses the difficult question of the situation faced by citizens of other countries in these Arab states which may spark fighting in the Gulf.

Iraq has said that interception of its tankers by the US and British forces is an act of aggression and a blockade which has not been ordered by the UN.

UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar confirmed the French interpretation of the problem and said a blockade would require a



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specific vote by the UN. Egypt for its part refused to close the Suez Canal to vessels going to or coming from Iraq since there was no "state of war with Baghdad." At the Security Council Yemen and Cuba said it was arbitrary and illegal to use force to prevent food and medicine from entering Iraq or Kuwait.

APS reported Yemen will aid Baghdad because "it can't starve another Arab," said Yemeni Foreign Minister Abdel Karim al Iriani.

Former US ambassador in Iraq Marshall Wiler said during a press conference to discuss Bush's ban on food that 100 million Arabs would turn against the United States if it used force against Iraq.

Some experts feel Arab troops in the region could be used as a spearhead following a strong air attack. The opening round would be an air strike, but sooner or later ground forces would have to move and the 10,000 men from Egypt, Syria, and Morocco would be ordered to get rid of any surviving resistance.

In diverse declarations Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has stressed the national determination to struggle without fear of foreign attack urging Muslims all over the world to start a Holy War against leaders of Saudi Arabia and eliminate the unfaithful foreigners wherever present.

A big majority of Arabs view the annexation of Kuwait as a lesser evil given the buildup of Western forces in the Gulf. They link these actions with Israel, colonialist exploitation, and even medieval crusades, says AP...

## Egypt

October 5 August 1990

Whatever the reasons or motives were, what might possibly be the cause of success and consent of the attack of one Arab country by another and its occupation and the overthrow or replacement of its government? ...

It was known that there was a disagreement between Iraq and Kuwait, and that part of this disagreement goes back a long time to border questions, whereas part of it is new, attached to the questions of petroleum, but who thought that the solution of this difference would come in the provocative manner in

which it did:

It is truly a grave and painful precedent that a difference between two Arab countries occurred-and what is greater...that kings and presidents intervened, and delegates flew between the two countries, and contacts occurred, and negotiations began, and all this was seen as a good beginning as the Arab nation had risen to a responsible level, and expanded to the limit of its differences...then the surprise as soon as the events revealed that in the midst of all this there was here a secret military project marking out and preparing to end the crisis by war, not dialogue, by arms, not peace, by guns, not words.

What worries me as an Arab, first of all, is what was completed by the speed comprising the crisis, and that the Arab attempts moved quickly to stop the evils which might threaten us as Arabs if we failed in resolving our differences, and that we opened the door to foreign intervention, whether it came through arms or peace or on the deck of a cruiser...

What worries me as an Arab is that I look at a map of the Arab world and say, "Here is a people of anger sharing the same feelings and anxieties, and that there is nothing more serious than that this map had been changed to the focus of the problems."

...Thus we come to the question: What will the Arab nation do after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait?

There is nothing for us in these grave hours except to hold on to the hope that prevails in the Arab mind. And to stop what happened on the Arab borders. And that Iraq helps its people to quell this volcano which erupted...and that its voices ring out, and we do not need its yoke to extend any further than that...

[translated from the Arabic by Hugh Galford]



## France

*Le Figaro* 20 August 1990  
 Will the "burglar of the century"  
 remain unpunished?

...The invasion of Kuwait is analogous to that of Poland and Czechoslovakia fifty years ago. Hitler also absurdly accused his powerless victims of "carrying on a policy of deliberate aggression". And in one of his speeches on the economic stakes of his battle, invoking inflation Hitler promised to guard the "stability of prices. And it is for that," he added cynically, "that my ss work." It is notably to maintain the stability of the price of petroleum that the army of Saddam Hussein works. The parallel is striking.

President Bush, when he ascended to the Presidency of the United States, declared in his inaugural address that "the era of dictators is closed." This is not evident in the Middle East. After 1933, the democracies permitted dictators to subvert Spain, to occupy Ethiopia, to annex the Sarre, Austria, the Sudetenland, Czechoslovakia. They realized too late their error and paid by the humiliations and hecatombs of Dunkirk, Stalingrad, Auschwitz. The democracies were saved from catastrophe by the fact that they beat Hitler in the race for the bomb. Hitler would not have hesitated to use it in order to dominate the universe...

...The West is today reaping the fruits sown of its errors. It contributed to the subsidizing of Iraq's hyper-sophisticated and comprehensive armaments and of technologies which permitted it to attack Iran and to try to impose regional hegemony. And with a carelessness bordering on unconsciousness the West continued to give Iraq not only missiles more and more precise and of greater and greater range, but facilitated [Iraq's] acquisition of materials which must abet, in the not-too-distant future, the making of the atomic bomb.

Iraq has already imported the keys to the making of combat gas. Should the West be giving Iraq absolute weapons in the name of immediate mercantile and sectarian advantages and at the price of the general peril engendered for humanity?...

...For it is precisely because it did not face the problem directly that the West was hypnotized on another problem—that of the

Palestinians. They have been artificially installed on the front-stage of preoccupations, of the cover of mediation, of international political action. By the focusing on this question, the principal theatres of political action have been masked where the West could, and should have aided the people of the Middle East in coming to democracy, justice, social emancipation, to economic progress, and to peace. The PLO has already shown where it stands: it has taken the part of Saddam Hussein...

...But if [the West] submits to the dictate of Iraq, in the spirit which was prevalent in Europe from 1935 to 1939, if it accords Iraq the respite which it seeks, if it contents itself with a gesticulation devoid of real content, then the Middle East and, through repercussions, the entire world, will be preparing for itself tomorrow full of mortal perils.

[The author is the Israeli Ambassador to France, Ovadia Soffer.]

[translated from the French by Frederick Kagan]

*Le Figaro* 20 August 1990  
 America Slides Toward War

...George Bush has two options. The first is a war of attrition. This presents many dangers: the American force, under an overwhelming heat, risks quickly giving the impression of bogging down. With the probable corollary: pressure at the level of the American electorate to "bring the boys home."

The second option is total war. This one actually commands the support of all of the commentators in Washington. George Bush, in comparing Saddam Hussein to Adolf Hitler, has given himself the moral justification which would permit him to crush the "brutal dictator" of Baghdad with methods of annihilation last used against the Führer.

This strategy also goes perfectly with the military tradition of the United States. Surrender must be unconditional. The vanquished must behave as the Southerners before the Northerners, victors of the Civil War. General MacArthur, the grand strategist of the Pacific campaign, affirmed: "Nothing can replace victory." The historian Russell Weigley



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underscores that, until 1962 the campaign manuals of the American army explained: "The ultimate objective of all military operations is the destruction of the forces of the enemy and his will to fight." Rick Atkinson of the *Washington Post* also recalls that the strategists of the Pentagon have always been inspired by the Napoleonic "spirit of the offensive". The campaign manual, version 1982, gives this advice: "One succeeds at destroying the forces of the adversary through destabilization by immediate and powerful strikes coming from surprising directions. Our operations must be rapid, unpredictable, violent. They must disorient." The tacticians of Washington predict that, in order to win, America will launch its Air Force into an assault on anti-air defenses and follow with razing the factories which produce chemical armaments as the first priority...

...Finally if George Bush waits too long, the international support from which he is benefitting will be frittered away. Observers in Washington of their own accord cite France as an example of a potentially fragile ally.

Yesterday in Washington no one was willing to bet one dollar on peace.

[translated from the French by Frederick Kagan]

## Germany

*Sueddeutsche Zeitung* 1-2 September 1990

### *The Price of Collective Security*

While the despot of Baghdad barter with human lives by insisting on immediate food supplies to secure the release of women and children, George Bush in the meantime invites his allies to the cashier's desk. At stake lies the amount of ten billion dollars—which Bonn, Tokyo, Riyadh, Seoul, and others are kindly requested to share. This would not only fund the American military presence in the Gulf, but also support those countries which bear the brunt of the embargo upon Iraq: Egypt, Turkey, and Jordan.

Money would certainly serve as a constructive contribution for both Bonn and Tokyo, which scrupulously strive to avoid direct military assistance. In this manner, they could prove their solidarity without really setting sail—a commitment with minimal risk. Chancellor Kohl also promised to examine which "material and technical help" could be forwarded.

Whoever shirks from risk should at the least undertake responsibility in his own manner. The honored principle of collective security, which is anchored in the UN Charter—one for all, all for one—will not be resolved through talk, but real deeds. Only in this way can this volunteer crisis-force function—and convince Hussein of the opposition of the international community to his aggression. Bonn should certainly pay for the costs of German reunification, but a solid contribution would reflect well on the republic.

[translated from the German by Gautam Dutta]

## India

*Times of India* 22 August 1990  
*Pakistan's Partisan Role*

In sending troops to Saudi Arabia at its request, Pakistan is acting as it has on several occasions in the past 35 years both under its military and civilian rulers. It has tied up with conservative West Asian regimes aligned with the West, even when this has meant taking sides in a regional or domestic conflict. Its strictly neutral stance in the Iran-Iraq conflict reflected the strategic compulsion to preserve safe border in the west to leave itself free to meet the threat it perceives from the east...

...It is a moot question whether Pakistan would have committed itself against Iraq if Ms. Bhutto had not been removed from power on August 6. Prior to this, Islamabad had deplored Iraq's action but taken the stand that it would not endorse economic sanctions—just as it had not in Iran's case earlier. Yet a Saudi emissary was told within hours of his arrival on August 13 that Islamabad would rush a contingent to safeguard the holiest shrines of Islam at the request of their guardian, King Fahd...

While Pakistan says that the size and



character of the force it is to send is still being finalised, knowledgeable commentators place the number at 5,000, not much more than a brigade. It seems, therefore, that the deployment is to serve more the Saudi political purpose, rather than a military one, of softening the widespread Arab resentment against involving the us, Israel's principal backer, in an intra-Arab conflict.

The *quid pro quo* Islamabad is looking for in terms of us hardware and Saudi largesse has already been widely discussed. Even as the Afghan conflict was winding down, Zia-ul-Haq [Pakistan's former dictator] often sought to establish that Pakistan's ability to serve American interests in the region would remain important to Washington. It was to be expected that Zia loyalists, now back in the saddle, would seize the opportunity offered by the Saudi request to underline this regional usefulness even in this post-Cold War period.

## Israel

*The Jerusalem Post* 3 September 1990

### *Where's the leadership now?*

The Gulf crisis has sent economic shock waves around the world.

The United States is plunging into a recession, Jordan wants \$10 billion in economic aid, Egypt is asking to have its debts wiped out, and America's friends around the world are hurting from the financial fallout.

Israel will feel the burden as well.

When Foreign Minister David Levy goes to Washington later this week, one of the major items on his agenda will be a request for the first increase in us economic and military aid in five years. But Israel's bargaining power is not what it once was.

Levy will be arriving just as the us opens its arsenal to its Arab friends—including many of Israel's declared enemies—wider than ever before. This is something the Pentagon and successive administrations have been trying to do for more than 15 years. Until now, their enthusiasm has been dampened by concern in Congress for Israel's security and by the

strength of the pro-Israel community.

But now, with Saudi Arabia publicly asking for us help for the first time, and with American forces committed in great strength to defending the kingdom, it would seem unpatriotic to oppose that effort.

There is a gap in the logic that says America should give the Gulf sheikdoms everything they want plus everything America would like to sell.

It was that kind of logic that drove the major arms sales to Kuwait. Those arms are now in the hands of the Iraqis, including Hawk anti-aircraft missiles, which, reports suggest, are being incorporated into the Iraqi armed forces with the help of the Jordanians, who have their own Hawk batteries. If the us had not moved swiftly to defend the Saudis, Saddam could now control their highly-sophisticated arsenal as well.

Even if the Saudis get everything on their wish list, the kingdom will not be able to defend itself against Iraq. But it can use all that equipment in a pan-Arab attack on Israel. That is not an argument against all arms sales to America's Arab friends. But there must be some careful thought given to the broader impact of what arms the us sells those friends.

The Saudi shopping list includes dozens of new F-15 fighters, hundreds of M60 and M1 tanks, a dozen C-130 transport aircraft, thousands of bombs, anti-tank artillery shells, anti-tank missiles, hundreds of armored vehicles, and much more, in what is shaping up to be the largest arms sale in history. This list will be supplemented in coming days by additional sales to several other Arab countries. Some of it is necessary, some of it is questionable, and some of it poses a greater threat to Israel than Iraq.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has said Israel will need additional us economic and military assistance, and David Levy will be making Israel's case when he meets with Secretary of State James Baker.

But Levy will be lacking some bargaining chips.

Pro-Israel organizations that in the past might have objected to such massive arms sales have in recent years been increasingly reluctant to challenge any arms sales to Israel's enemies. In 1989, one organization, historically in the forefront of such challenges, publicly endorsed the M1 tank sale to the Saudis. Late last month, a group of influential Jewish leaders privately and publicly endorsed the massive new Saudi



## Soviet Union

*Pravda* 15 August 1990  
 "Quarantine" or Blockade?

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arms sale.

In their haste to assure Defense Secretary Dick Cheney of their support, in exchange for vague promises to maintain Israel's qualitative edge, some of these Jewish leaders once again appear to be more anxious to preserve their Republican credentials and access to the Bush administration than they are to protect Israel's security.

Historically, every time the Pentagon has notified the Congress of an arms sale to one of Israel's neighbors or enemies—regardless of how advanced the weapons systems involved—it has included and assurance that the sale would have no impact on the arms balance or on Israel's security.

Although any given arms transfer in itself may have little or no direct impact, the cumulative effect of all of these sales over the last decade has been to steadily reduce [*sic*] Israel's margin of safety.

What the Jewish leaders failed to get from Cheney was any firm commitment to provide Israel with the weapons it now needs and the money to pay for them. Israel's economy is strained, and it cannot afford to match the new military and economic challenges it faces without a significant infusion of assistance.

Moreover, when this select group of largely pro-administration Jewish leaders took themselves out of the game, they pulled the rug out from under any of Israel's friends in the Congress who might later want to challenge elements of the coming avalanche of arms sales.

If Bush, Baker and Cheney know Israel cannot depend on its friends to make a credible fight, the administration will have less incentive to help Israel counter the new threat of it from all this hardware.

That would not disappoint a Bush administration that is not too fond of the Shamir government—and that will find itself under new pressure from its Arab friends to lean on Israel to end its "illegal occupation of Arab territory" the way it has leaned on Iraq.

Anxiety growing into alarm—in this way we can characterize the feelings of millions of people around the world who have turned their gaze now to the region of the Persian Gulf.

The politics of armed confrontation has its own logic. Baghdad has not confined itself to a "blitzkrieg" against Kuwait. It announced the annexation of this sovereign state, declaring that it intended to give [the annexation] "an eternal character." More than that a holy war was proclaimed by the Iraqi government against the United States. [The government] called on Arabs to overthrow the "oil emirs." Representatives of Iraq are already talking about the possibility of using chemical weapons in "self-defense."

On the other side, with every day the number of American troops stationed in Saudi Arabia to facilitate the necessary defense of that country grows.

More and more frequently, however, one hears the opinion that sufficient "restraint" begins to acquire the character of an operation counting on the long-term presence of the armed forces of the US in the middle-eastern region. The naval armada in the waters of the Gulf already consists of many tens of squadrons in which aircraft carriers number the largest. The "quarantine" of Iraq is turning into a blockade. In the United States a warlike mood is warming up. In the American press "possible scenarios" of US military action against Iraq are openly foreseen.

New countries are entering into the orbit of the opposition. England, France, and several other countries are sending warships to the Persian Gulf.

Together with this, in the information that has been received in the last few days, new notes are beginning to sound more loudly: the growing understanding that incautious fanning of the flames may lead to fire. "The crisis in the Persian Gulf," says the *Washington Post*, "has already been transformed from a distant conflict into a confrontation at a global level which has deep military, political, and diplomatic conse-



quences. This confrontation threatens to lead to a protracted dead-end situation and potentially may become the most serious challenge to America since the time of the Viet Nam war."

History clearly shows how much suffering the route of wars brings to peoples, how difficult the exit from bloodshed is. Already today there is more than enough inflammable material in the region of the Persian Gulf. Is it so necessary then to throw even more there? However much possibility exists of regulating the conflict through negotiations, that much of the potential of the UN to regulate remains unused.

[Translated from the Russian by Frederick Kagan.]

## Spain

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*More than just an error*

A Spanish battleship and two cruisers have been navigating the Mediterranean Sea for three days. But, on the other hand, the government seems to be decided—as demonstrated yesterday in the *Cortes* [Spain's "House of Representatives"—C.V.]—on putting off the hour when it will have to give a convincing explanation to the parliamentary deputies about a decision of great importance that has caused great disconcertment in public opinion. Explainable disconcertment which is as much because of the international coalition full of threats as because of the novelty of a Spanish military presence far from our territory. When the government gives the impression of trying to avoid a parliamentary explanation for such a hot issue, it is digging a hole for itself.

The attitude of the government in its reaction to the Iraqi aggression has been substantially correct. Spain has been at the height of its international role, applying the UN resolutions. And, at the present time, Spain has contributed three ships in conjunction with other European countries to help improve the efficacy of the embargo dictated by the Security Council. But the decision to send ships could

not but create doubts in wide sectors of public opinion. The worst that the government could have done was to give the impression of feeling coerced. When a decision like this is made, it has to be done in a plenary session of the whole government and with the proper solemnity of an option that comprises the interests of the state. This defective procedure has stimulated commentaries centered on secondary aspects, forgetting that the defense of international judicial order, which the UN embodies, is an obligation that Spain should assume, although it requires that certain mental habits be broken...

...The government cannot deny the existence of sectors of Spanish opinion that are particularly sensitive to the idea of our foreign policy being controlled by Washington's decisions. In this case, however, an essential argument for sending the ships consists precisely in that the support of UN decisions in the Gulf should not be essentially North American. The greater the presence of European countries, the greater the region's interests will be weighted so that the final solution to the conflict will not be focused only on the objectives of the United States, but on the conception of a more flexible Europe, more open to Arab collaboration, more willing to have political solutions, in this case, of course, the UN demand that Iraq withdraw from Kuwait...

[Translated from the Spanish by Carlos Viana.]

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